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Die saamgestelde verbale vorm van Nederlands na Afrikaans.

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SUMMARY.

In this study of the development of the functions of the periphrastic verbal form (i.e. initially the present of "hebben" or "zijn" with a past participle, and later "het" or "is" with a past participle) in written language from 17th century Dutch to Afrikaans, an attempt has been made to contribute to the diachronic description of the Afrikaans syntax on a stylistic basis. An attempt has been made to give a survey of the changes in the system of verbal forms for the expression of occurrences in the past. Indirectly it may also be a contribution towards a better insight into the problem of the origin of Afrikaans and towards the internal history of this language.

Based on extracts drawn from different language periods (i.e. 17th century Dutch, Cape Dutch and Afrikaans) an analysis was made of the different syntactic and stylistic functions of the periphrastic form. The results of this analysis were classified and systematized and have been described accordingly. Conclusions have been illustrated with several examples cited in their context.

As far as possible the analysed texts were chosen from different genre types. In order to get an insight into the use of the periphrastic form in 17th century popular Dutch a number of farces was analysed in which the popular language is used. The use of this form in colloquial speech was examined in personal letters and popular itineraries; in the stylized usage it was examined in official diaries, reports and instructions, and in the Dutch Authorised Version of the Bible. The latter played an important part in the history of the Afrikaans language because it was practically the only reading-matter of a large part of the population for nearly two hundred years. As far as the Cape Dutch period is concerned, the investigator mainly has to rely on letters and a few diaries. It was the intention of the writers of these documents to use Dutch, but they often relapsed into the colloquial form because their knowledge of Dutch was not always adequate, since the colloquial language had already deviated so much in the direction of the later Afrikaans. Since about the middle of the previous century the flow of written Afrikaans has gradually increased. Several writings of different stylistic types from this period were analysed.

It was evident that the periphrastic form especially served to express isolated facts from the past. This was clear especially where this form was used as a *perfect*. A functional difference was made between the *resultative perfect*, the expression of a fact from the past which stands in a causal relation to a situation in the present, the *inclusive perfect*, by which is indicated that a fact from the past continues into the present, and the *retrospective perfect*, in which is expressed that the writer looks back on an isolated fact in the past and represents this fact as completed in the present. These different functions of the perfect have different syntactic possibilities and necessities of combination through which they can be distinguished from one another. The use of the periphrastic form to express the perfect functions practically did not change from 17th century Dutch to Afrikaans as far as its characteristics and possibilities of application are concerned.

In contrast to the perfect, the use of the periphrastic form as a *narrative perfect*, i.e. to express a fact from the past which actually belongs to a progressive series, is not an aspectic function but a stylistic application. In the introduction to a series, in the resumption of a narrative after an interruption, in the comment, recapitulation or in the expression of an important fact the writer isolates a fact from the past more or less intentionally in order to stress such a fact. As a stylistic application the narrative perfect is effective only when used sparingly. If it is used too often it loses its stylistic value and the periphrastic form becomes a form variant of the *preterite*. This already occurred to a certain extent in 17th century Dutch and evidently contributed to the confusion in connection with the verbal forms used for the expression of facts from the past in Cape Dutch which caused the preterite form to fall into disuse. In Afrikaans the narrative perfect merged into a new verbal system.

With the exception of “was”, “kon”, “sou”, “wou”, “moes” and a sporadic “dag” or “dog”, “wis” and “had” the preterite no longer exists as a living form category in Afrikaans. It has been replaced by the radical and the periphrastic form. In the expression of facts from the past the old formal contrast: periphrastic form — preterite form has been replaced by a new one, namely: periphrastic form — radical. The two systems are not exactly parallel. As indicated the periphrastic form

expresses the perfect in both systems. In the narrative the preterite form was used in the older period while the radical is used in Afrikaans. The use of the periphrastic form as a narrative perfect has extended to the expression of non-isolated facts from the past in the non-narrative style, as in the report or treatise, the argumentation, explanation and comment. This applies especially to the use in the main clause. In some subordinate clauses this system is crossed by another in which the contrast: periphrastic form — radical above all has the function of aspect. It was evident in subordinate clauses with “toe” as conjunction that the radical expresses a fact in the past which is presented as simultaneous with the fact from the past in the main clause, while the periphrastic form expresses a fact from the past which is presented as completed in relation to the fact from the past in the main clause, and thus expresses a pluperfect.

In 17th century Dutch the periphrastic form appeared sporadically in sentences in which the *pluperfect* was expressed; the usual form, however, was the preterite form of “hebben” or “zijn” plus a past participle. In Cape Dutch the periphrastic form began to rival the pluperfect form and in Afrikaans it has become the only verbal form in sentences in which the pluperfect is expressed.

In all the investigated periods the periphrastic form was the usual verbal form in sentences in which the *future perfect* is expressed. Like the pluperfect, this function is also aspectic.

The periphrastic form also intruded on the domain of the *irrealis*. In the older periods this function was expressed by the preterite form when the action, occurrence or situation which is realized as unreal, referred to the present, and by the pluperfect form when it denoted the past. In Cape Dutch already a number of cases were met in which the periphrastic form expressed the latter function. In Afrikaans it also took over the function of expressing an unreality in the past. Here also the reader has to rely on the context for a correct interpretation of the form, since the formal difference between the indication of the *irrealis* in the present and in the past has disappeared.

That the perfect form — in this case the periphrastic form — took over

some of the functions of the preterite form, has occurred previously in the history of the Indo-European languages and in different language groups. Especially in the South German and Swiss German dialects this development has an issue which shows a remarkable resemblance to that in Afrikaans.

Between about 1780 and 1810 the use of the periphrastic form began to assume characteristics which can be designated as Afrikaans.

Different causes can be pointed out for the changes in the verbal system from 17th century Dutch to Afrikaans, of which the most important probably lies in the special character of the perfect. Since the perfect has points of contact with both the present and the past, transitions can easily take place. Through the connection of the fact from the past, expressed by the perfect, with the present this function gets a subjective character through which the speaker comes forward in the speaking situation. Since the dialect speaker is egocentric in his thinking and speaking, he gives preference to the perfect, and thus to the periphrastic form, in narrating facts from the past. This tendency was probably strengthened by the high frequency of the perfect.

A linguistic factor which must be considered is the falling out of an unstressed [ə] and of [t] after [f], [x], [k], [p] and [s] in the auslaut through which the forms of the present and of the preterite of the so-called weak verbs became similar and through which a need arose for a new form to express the past tense. This tendency was evidently strengthened by the uncertainty which existed as a result of the multitude of different preterite forms of the so-called strong verbs.

An important psychological factor is the general tendency of dialect speakers towards the analytic way of thinking and speaking, and the fact that these speakers prefer the concrete way of thinking to the abstract way of thinking. Since the perfect is an aspectic category it is more concrete than the preterite, which is a temporal category.

Extra-linguistic factors which could have played an important part were the composition of the population at the Cape during the first hundred and fifty years of the settlement, and the absence of the checking influence of a standard language.

The development of the periphrastic verbal form from 17th century Dutch to Afrikaans can be summarized as follows: the possibilities existing in 17th century Dutch, and especially in the popular language, developed into a strong tendency in Cape Dutch and this has become system in Afrikaans. In this development Afrikaans and modern Dutch have diverged from each other.

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